

INFORMATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Child Abuse Care Line	1-800-842-2288
Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence	1-888-774-2900
Connecticut Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities	1-800-842-7303
Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Service	1-888-999-5545
Department of Social Services, Elder Abuse	1-800-994-9422
INFO-LINE	211
Mothers Against Drunk Driving-MADD	1-800-544-3690
Office of Victim Services, CT Judicial Branch	1-800-822-8428
Survivors of Homicide	1-888-833-4764



OFFICE OF VICTIM SERVICES
Focusing on a brighter future

www.jud.state.ct.us

JDP-VS-15 3-05

RIGHTS OF CRIME VICTIMS in CONNECTICUT

Summary of State Statutes



Connecticut Judicial Branch
OFFICE OF VICTIM SERVICES

31 Cooke Street
Plainville, Connecticut 06062

(800) 822-8428
(860) 747-3994

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Constitution of the State of Connecticut, Article XXIX	2
Statutory Citations	3
1. Right to Notification	3
2. Attendance at Court Proceedings and	7
Victim Testimony/Input	
3. Restitution/Compensation	12
4. Access to Confidential Records/Test Results	13
5. Family Violence Matters	16
6. Other Rights	18
Definitions	20

Copyright 2005, Judicial Branch State of Connecticut. This document is the property of the Judicial Branch and may not be copied or reproduced without the express written consent of the Judicial Branch, State of Connecticut.

INTRODUCTION

Victims of crime in Connecticut have rights defined by state and federal law. Most of these rights concern:

- Being notified of criminal justice proceedings
- Attending and giving input to certain proceedings
- Seeking compensation or restitution
- Access to some confidential records, and
- Special family violence-related rights.

Different state organizations are responsible for certain rights. These include:

- Board of Pardons
- Board of Parole
- Department of Correction
- Municipal and State Police
- Office of Adult Probation (Court Support Services Division, Judicial Branch)
- Office of the State's Attorney
- Office of Victim Services
- The Courts

This booklet presents a summary of the statutory rights of crime victims in Connecticut as of October 1, 2004. The individual listings may be subject to certain additional limitations set forth in the General Statutes.

The Office of Victim Services (OVS), Connecticut Judicial Branch, offers crime victim information and referral, victim advocacy, contract funding, and financial compensation.

**OVS may be reached by calling (800) 822-8428
Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

Constitution of the State of Connecticut
Article XXIX - Rights of Victims of Crime

In all criminal prosecutions, a victim, as the general assembly may define by law, shall have the following rights:

- (1) the right to be treated with fairness and respect throughout the criminal justice process;
- (2) the right to timely disposition of the case following arrest of the accused, provided no right of the accused is abridged;
- (3) the right to be reasonably protected from the accused throughout the criminal justice process;
- (4) the right to notification of court proceedings;
- (5) the right to attend the trial and all other court proceedings the accused has the right to attend, unless such person is to testify and the court determines that such person's testimony would be materially affected if such person hears other testimony;
- (6) the right to communicate with the prosecution;
- (7) the right to object to or support any plea agreement entered into by the accused and the prosecution and to make a statement to the court prior to the acceptance by the court of the plea of guilty or nolo contendere by the accused;
- (8) the right to make a statement to the court at sentencing;
- (9) the right to restitution which shall be enforceable in the same manner as any other cause of action or as otherwise provided by law; and
- (10) the right to information about the arrest, conviction, sentence, imprisonment and release of the accused.

The general assembly shall provide by law for the enforcement of this subsection. Nothing in this subsection or in any law enacted pursuant to this subsection shall be construed as creating a basis for vacating a conviction or ground for appellate relief in any criminal case.

STATUTORY CITATIONS:

1. Right to Notification
2. Attendance at Court Proceedings and Victim Testimony/Input
3. Restitution/Compensation
4. Access to Confidential Records/Test Results
5. Family Violence Matters
6. Miscellaneous

1. RIGHT TO NOTIFICATION Re:

Assistance at Crime Scene and Notification

Re: Rights and Services.

A peace officer at a crime scene shall render immediate assistance to any victim, including obtaining medical assistance if required. The peace officer shall also present any victim with a card informing the victim of the rights and services available to the victim and shall refer the victim to Office of Victim Services for additional information on rights and services. (C.G.S. § 54-222a)

Notification to Victim of Judicial Proceedings.

The state's attorney shall notify any victim of an offense, if the victim has requested notification and has provided a current address, of any judicial proceedings relating to the cases including:

- Arrest of the defendant
- Arraignment of the defendant
- Release of defendant pending judicial proceedings
- Other proceedings in the prosecution including:
 - Entry of plea of guilty
 - Trial
 - Sentencing

(C.G.S. § 51-286e)

Victim Right to Notification.

Victim services advocates will notify victims of their rights and ask victims to attest to the notification by signing a form that will be placed in the court file. (C.G.S. § 54-220)

Notification of Arraignment to Deceased Victim's Family.

In cases where an offense results in the death of the victim, the state's attorney shall identify and notify a member of the immediate family or next of kin of the date, time and place of the arraignment and shall furnish the designated family member or next of kin with the name and telephone number of the person to contact for additional information or information on the status of the case. (C.G.S. § 51-286d)

Notice of Application for Accelerated Pretrial Rehabilitation and Opportunity to be Heard.

A defendant who makes application for participation in an accelerated pretrial rehabilitation program must provide notice to the victim or victims of the crime or motor vehicle violation, by registered or certified mail. The victim or victims have an opportunity to be heard on the application. (C.G.S. § 54-56e)

Motion for or Order of Suspension of Prosecution for Treatment of Alcohol or Drug Dependency.

In order to have a prosecution suspended for the treatment of alcohol or drug dependency, the accused must give notice of the crime and of the pending motion for suspension of prosecution to the victim by registered or certified mail. The victim must be given the opportunity to testify at the hearing on the motion. (C.G.S. § 17a-696)

Request by a Defendant for Assignment to the Family Violence Education Program.

The court shall give notice to the victim(s) that the defendant has

requested assignment to the family violence education program and, where possible, give the victim(s) opportunity to be heard. (C.G.S. § 46b-38c(g))

Court and Psychiatric Security Review Board Decisions.

After commitment by the court to the jurisdiction of the Psychiatric Security Review Board, the board shall make reasonable efforts to notify victims of any hearings, orders or escapes relating to the discharge, conditional release or confinement of a person found not guilty of criminal charges by reason of mental disease or defect. The victim may appear to make a statement at any court or board hearing. (C.G.S. §§ 17a-581, 17a-596, 17a-601)

Notification by Office of Victim Services/Department of Correction of Status of Inmate.

A crime victim may request notification with the Office of Victim Services or the Department of Correction whenever an inmate makes any application to the:

- Board of Pardons
- Board of Parole
- Department of Correction for release other than furlough
- Sentencing court or judge for sentence reduction, or
- Sentence Review Division

The victim may also request notification whenever an inmate is scheduled to be released from a correctional institution for other than a furlough. The Office of Victim Services and/or the Department of Correction shall notify the victim of any of the above upon request, if the victim has provided a current mailing address. The request for notification and the victim's mailing address shall be kept confidential. (C.G.S. §§ 54-228, 54-230)

Board of Pardons:

Testimony of Crime Victim at Session of Board.

Notification of Office of Victim Services of Board's action. The Board shall permit the victim of any crime to appear before the Board for the purpose of making a statement for the record concerning whether the convicted person should be granted a commutation, release or pardon. The victim may choose to submit a written statement to the Board in lieu of a personal appearance. The Board of Pardons shall notify the Office of Victim Services upon the granting of a conditioned or absolute commutation of punishment or release, of a conditional or absolute commutation from the penalty of death, or of a pardon. (C.G.S. § 18-27a)

Notification by Office of Victim Services/Department of Correction Regarding Request to be Exempt from Registration on Sex Offender Registry.

A crime victim, who is a minor or a nonviolent or violent sex offense victim, may request notification with the Office of Victim Services or the Department of Correction whenever a person who was convicted or found not guilty by reason of mental disease or defect files an application to be exempt from the registration requirements of C.G.S. § 54-251 or files a petition for an order restricting the dissemination of the registration information or removing such restriction. The Office of Victim Services and/or the Department of Correction shall notify the victim whenever a person files an application or petition, if the victim has provided a current mailing address. (C.G.S. §§ 54-228, 54-230)

Release of Inmate from Correctional Facility.

Upon release of an inmate from a correctional facility, the Commissioner of Correction or designee shall notify any victim of the crime of such person's release if the victim has requested notification and provided the Commissioner with a current address. (C.G.S. § 18-81e)

Notice of Dismissal of Case.

Within two years from the date of disposition of any case, the fact that the case was dismissed MAY be disclosed to the victim of a crime or his legal representative. The identity of the defendant(s) shall not be released, except that any information contained in the erased records, including the identity of the person charged may be released to the victim or representative upon written application by the victim or representative stating:

- that a civil action has been commenced for loss or damage resulting from such act, or
- the intent to bring a civil action for such loss or damage (C.G.S. § 54-142c)

Notification of Failure of Defendant to Return to Treatment Facility.

The prosecuting authority shall, within available resources, make reasonable effort to notify any victim(s) of the failure of a defendant, placed for treatment on an inpatient basis at a mental health or mental retardation facility, to return to the facility after release from the facility on a furlough or for work, therapy or any other reason. (C.G.S. § 54-56d(1))

2. ATTENDANCE AT COURT PROCEEDINGS AND VICTIM TESTIMONY/INPUT

Victim's Input as Part of Pre-Sentence Investigation by Probation Office in a Criminal Matter.

Whenever a pre-sentence investigation is required, the probation officer shall inquire into, among other things, the attitude of the complainant or victim, or of the immediate family where possible in cases of homicide, and the damages suffered by the victim, including medical expenses, loss of earnings and property loss. (C.G.S. § 54-91a)

Victim Right to Attend Proceedings and Make Statement to the Court.

The Court will ask, on the record, whether a crime victim is present, and if so, wants to make a statement or has submitted a written statement. If no victim is present and no statement has been submitted, the court must ask, on the record, if victim contact was attempted. (C.G.S. § 54-91c)

Right of Victim to Seek Assistance in the Preparation of Impact Statement.

Victim services advocates help victims prepare impact statements. (C.G.S. § 54-220)

Testimony of Crime Victim Prior to Acceptance of Plea and at Sentencing Hearing.

Prior to the imposition of sentence, a plea of guilty or a plea of nolo contendere, the court shall permit the victim of any crime, to make an oral statement to the court or to submit a written statement which may include victim's opinion of any plea agreement. If the victim is deceased, the victim's legal representative, immediate family member or designated decision maker may submit a statement. Any statement shall relate to the facts of the case, the appropriateness of any penalty and the extent of any injuries, financial losses, and loss of earnings directly resulting from the crime.

The prosecuting authority shall give the victim notice of the date, time and place of the original sentencing hearing or any proceeding concerning acceptance of a plea agreement provided the victim has submitted a proper request for notification with the prosecuting authority.

Prior to the acceptance by the court of a plea agreement, the victim has the right to request a copy of the terms of the written plea agreement from the prosecuting authority. (C.G.S. § 54-91c)

Right to Attend Hearing to Make Statement on Reduction of Sentence or Discharge by Judge.

At a hearing held by the sentencing court or judge, the court or judge shall permit any victim of the crime to appear before the court or judge for the purpose of making a statement for the record concerning whether or not the sentence should be reduced, the defendant discharged or the defendant discharged on probation or conditional discharge. In lieu of such appearance, the victim may submit a written statement to the court or judge which shall be made part of the record at the hearing. (C.G.S. § 53a-39)

Right to Attend and/or Make a Statement before the Superior Court's Sentence Review Division.

Crime victims, their legal representatives, or the immediate family of deceased victims have the right to make a statement before the Superior Court's Sentence Review Division as to whether or not the sentence or commitment of the defendant should be increased or decreased or should stand. Instead of a personal appearance, the victim is allowed to submit a written statement to the division, which it must make part of the record. (C.G.S. § 51-196)

Request by Victim for Hearing by Panel of Parole Board Considering Release After Administrative Review.

A parole hearing shall be conducted by a panel of the Board of Parole if a victim requests such a hearing. (C.G.S. § 54-125b)

Testimony of Crime Victim at Parole Hearing.

At a hearing held by a panel of the Board of Parole for determining the eligibility of an inmate incarcerated for the commission of any crime, such panel shall permit any victim of the crime to appear before the panel to make a statement for the record concerning the release on parole or any terms or conditions to be imposed upon any such release. The victim may submit a written statement to the panel in lieu of an appearance which shall be made part of the record at the parole hearing.

ing. For purposes of this section, “victim” means a crime victim, the legal representative of the victim, or member of the deceased victim’s immediate family, or the victim’s designated decision maker.
(C.G.S. § 54-126a)

Representative of Homicide Victim Entitled to be Present at Trial of Defendant.

A representative of a homicide victim shall be entitled to be present at the trial or any proceeding concerning the prosecution of the defendant for the homicide, except that a judge may remove such representative from the trial or proceeding or any portion thereof for the same causes and in the same manner as the rules of court or provisions of the general statutes provide for the exclusion or removal of the defendant. No representative may be excluded without a hearing.
(C.G.S. § 54-85c)

Right to Attend Delinquency Proceedings.

In delinquency proceedings, any victim of the delinquent act, the parents or guardian of such victim and any appointed victim advocate shall not be excluded unless the judge specifically orders otherwise.
(C.G.S. § 46b-122)

Victim’s Input as Part of Pre-disposition Investigation by Probation Officer in a Delinquency Matter.

Prior to the disposition of the case of any child convicted of a delinquent act, the probation officer shall conduct an investigation which shall include, inter alia, an inquiry into the attitude of the complainant or victim and any damages suffered by the victim including medical expenses, loss of earnings and property loss. No disposition of the child’s case shall be made until such investigation has been completed and the results have been placed before the judge. (C.G.S. § 46b-134)

Statement of Victim/Victim’s Representative at Delinquency Proceeding.

Any victim of alleged delinquent conduct, the parents or guardian of such victim, an appointed advocate, or the victim’s counsel shall have the right to appear before the court in any proceeding on the alleged delinquency of a child for the purpose of making a statement to the court concerning the disposition of the case. (C.G.S. § 46b-138b)

Testimony of Victim of Child Abuse.

The court MAY, upon motion, order that the testimony of a child victim of an assault, sexual assault or abuse, who is twelve years old or younger, be taken in a room other than the courtroom in the presence and under the supervision of the trial judge hearing the matter and be televised by closed circuit equipment in the courtroom or be recorded for later showing before the court. The people present during the testimony may be limited by the court. (C.G.S. § 54-86g)

Victim of Violent Crime or Representative of Deceased Victim Permitted to Attend Court Proceedings.

Any victim of a violent crime or the legal representative or the immediate family member of a deceased victim may attend all court proceedings that are part of the court record. (C.G.S. § 54-85f)

Competency of Child as Witness.

Any child victim of assault, sexual assault or abuse shall be competent to testify without prior qualification. (C.G.S. § 54-86h)

Polygraph Examination of Victims of Sexual Assault Restricted.

No member of any municipal police department, the state police or the Division of Criminal Justice may request or require any victim of sexual assault under C.G.S. §§ 53a-70 – 53a-73a to submit to or take a polygraph examination. (C.G.S. § 54-86j)

3. RESTITUTION/COMPENSATION

Victim Compensation.

Upon application to the Office of Victim Services, the victim of a crime may receive compensation for expenses actually and reasonably incurred, loss of earning power, pecuniary loss to the dependents of a deceased victim, including 0-1% loans of up to \$100,000 and pecuniary loss to the relatives or dependents or designated decision maker of a deceased victim for attendance at court proceedings.

(C.G.S. §§ 54-209 – 211, and 1-56r)

Victim Compensation.

Blind or disabled crime victims may apply for compensation for injuries to their guide or assistance dog under the same circumstances as they may receive it for personal injuries.

(C.G.S. § 54-201(2)(B))

Crime victims may receive up to \$2000 for emergency compensation.
(C.G.S. § 54-217)

Restitution Services

The following persons also may obtain restitution services including medical, psychiatric, psychological, social services, or social rehabilitation services:

- Victims of child abuse and family members
- Victims of sexual assault and family members
- Family members of a victim of homicide (C.G.S. § 54-216)
- Designated decision maker of homicide victim (C.G.S. §§ 54-216 and 1-56r)

Disposition Upon Conviction as Delinquent/Restitution.

Upon conviction of a child as delinquent, the court MAY order the child or the parent(s) or guardian of the child, or both to make restitution to the victim of the offense. If the child has engaged in conduct which results in property damage or personal injury, the court MAY order the child or the parent(s) or guardian of the child, if such parent/guardian

had knowledge of and condoned the conduct of the child, or both the child and the parent(s)/guardian to make restitution. (C.G.S. § 46b-140)

Right to Profits Derived from Crime of Violence.

A crime victim has the right to file a civil law suit seeking the profits the defendant might receive from any publication, movie, broadcast or dramatization of the violent crime if the defendant is convicted of the crime for which compensation may be paid by the Office of Victim Services. (C.G.S. § 54-218)

Return of Seized Property.

A crime victim may request the police department to return any personal property confiscated by them in the investigation or prosecution of the crime committed against the victim. The property will be returned within 30 days of the request unless the court orders it held for a longer period. The victim has six months from the disposition of the criminal case to claim the property. After that, the property will be disposed of. (C.G.S. §§ 54-36a, 54-203(b)(7)(E))

4. ACCESS TO CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS/ TEST RESULTS

Privileged Communications Between Psychiatrist/ Psychologist and Patient for Use in Civil Action.

The consent of a patient who consults with a psychiatrist or a psychologist is not required for the disclosure or transmission of communications or records of the patient to a member of the immediate family or legal representative of the victim of a homicide committed by the patient where such patient has been found not guilty of the offense by reason of mental disease or defect. These communications shall only be available during the pendency of, and for use in, a civil action relating to the person found not guilty. The family member or legal representative must request the disclosure not later than six years after such finding of not guilty. (C.G.S. §§ 52-146c, 52-146f)

Delinquency Records.

The record of the case of a juvenile matter involving delinquency proceedings shall be available to the victim of the crime committed by such child to the same extent as the record of the case of a defendant in a criminal proceeding in the regular criminal docket of the Superior Court is available to a victim of the crime committed by such defendant. The court shall designate an official from whom such victim may request such information. Records disclosed pursuant to this subsection shall not be further disclosed. (C.G.S. § 46b-124(e))

Youthful Offender Records.

The records of any youth adjudged a youthful offender may be disclosed to an advocate appointed pursuant to section 54-221 for a victim of a crime committed by the youth. The records disclosed pursuant to this subsection shall not be further disclosed. (C.G.S. § 54-76l)

Disclosure of Address and Telephone Number by Victim of Sexual Assault Not Required.

Any person who has been the victim of a sexual assault, injury or risk of injury, or impairing of morals, or of any attempt thereof, shall not be required to divulge his or her address or telephone number during any trial or pretrial evidentiary hearing; provided the judge presiding over the legal proceeding shall find: the information is not material to the proceeding, the identity of the victim has been satisfactorily established, AND the current address of the victim will be made available to the defense in the same manner and time as such information is made available to the defense for other criminal offenses. (C.G.S. § 54-86d)

Confidentiality of Name and Address of Victim of Sexual Assault. Availability of Information to Accused.

The name and address of the victim of a sexual assault, injury or risk of injury, or impairing of morals, or of any attempt thereof, shall be confidential and shall only be disclosed upon order of the Court. This information will be available to the accused in the same manner and time as such information is available to persons accused of other criminal offenses. (C.G.S. § 54-86e)

Confidentiality of Statements Made to Sexual Assault Counselor or Battered Women's Counselor.

Any statements made to a sexual assault or battered women's counselor (as defined by statute) will remain confidential and will not be admitted as evidence in court unless the victim making the statement waives this right. (C.G.S. § 52-146k)

Admissibility of Evidence of Present or Prior Sexual Conduct of Victim.

In the prosecution of a sexual assault case, the present or prior sexual conduct of the victim will not be brought into evidence in the trial unless the Court determines, after a hearing, that the material is relevant and material to the criminal trial. (C.G.S. § 54-86f)

HIV Testing of Defendant Accused of Certain Sexual Offenses.

If the victim of a specified sexual offense requests that the accused be tested, the court MAY order the testing of the accused for the presence of the etiologic agent for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome or Human Immunodeficiency Virus. The results of such test MAY be disclosed to the victim. Statutory prohibitions and limitations relating to the further disclosure of such test result apply. (C.G.S. § 54-102a)

HIV Testing of Persons Convicted of Certain Sexual Offenses.

A court entering judgment of conviction or an adjudication of delinquency for commission of certain sexual offenses SHALL, at the request of the victim of such crime, order that the offender be tested for the presence of the etiologic agent for acquired immune deficiency syndrome or human immunodeficiency virus and that the results be disclosed to the victim and the offender. Statutory prohibitions and limitations relating to the further disclosure of such test results apply. (C.G.S. § 54-102b)

5. FAMILY VIOLENCE MATTERS

Assistance at Scene of Family Violence Incident.

At the scene of a family violence incident the peace officer shall provide, among other things, the following assistance to the victim:

- assistance in obtaining medical treatment if required
- notification of the right to file an affidavit or warrant for arrest
- information on the services available and referral to the Office of Victim Services.

In addition, in cases where it is determined that no cause exists for arrest, the officer shall remain at the scene for a reasonable time until in the reasonable judgment of the officer the likelihood of further imminent violence has been eliminated. (C.G.S. § 46b-38b)

Relief from Abuse by Family or Household Member.

A victim of assault by a spouse or former spouse, family or household member, a person with whom victim has had a child, or a person with whom victim has recently been dating, may request the arrest of the offender, request that the court issue a protective order or apply to the court for a restraining order.

Relief from Abuse by Family or Household Member.

Family Violence Intervention Units can provide information about these issues. (C.G.S. §§ 54-203(b)(7)(I), 46b-15, 46b-38c)

Protective Orders.

In cases of family violence, the court MAY issue a protective order, a certified copy of which shall be sent to the victim by the clerk of the court and a copy of which shall be sent within forty-eight (48) hours of its issuance to the appropriate law enforcement agency. (C.G.S. § 46b-38c)

In stalking cases, upon the arrest of a person, the court MAY issue a protective order, a certified copy of which shall be sent to the victim and a copy of which shall also be sent to the appropriate law enforcement agency within forty-eight (48) hours of issuance. (C.G.S. § 54-1k)

Standing Criminal Restraining Order.

If a person is convicted of certain specified assault or sexual assault offenses against a family or household member, as defined by statute, the court MAY issue a standing criminal restraining order which shall remain in effect until modified or revoked by the court for good cause shown. (C.G.S. § 53a-40e)

Availability of Services of Local Family Violence Intervention Units.

Each geographical area of the Superior Court shall have a local Family Violence Intervention Unit which shall take referrals from a judge or prosecutor, prepare written or oral reports on each case to be presented to the court at the next court date, shall provide or arrange for services for victims and offenders, and shall establish centralized reporting procedures.

Availability of Services of Local Family Violence

Intervention Units.

All information provided to the local Family Violence Intervention Unit shall be for the sole purpose of preparing the report and recommending services and shall be confidential, except that if victim has indicated that the defendant holds a permit to carry a pistol or revolver or possesses one or more firearms, the Family Intervention Unit must disclose such information to the court and the prosecuting authority. (C.G.S. § 46b-38c)

6. OTHER RIGHTS

Employment Rights.

An employer may not fire, harass, threaten or otherwise retaliate against an employee for appearing under a subpoena as a witness in any criminal proceeding. (C.G.S. § 54-85d)

An employer shall not deprive an employee of employment, penalize or threaten or otherwise coerce an employee with respect thereto, because the employee obeys a legal subpoena to appear before any court of this state as a witness in any criminal proceeding, the employee attends a court proceeding or participates in a police investigation related to a criminal case in which the employee is a crime victim, a restraining order has been issued on the employee's behalf pursuant to section 46b-15, as amended, or a protective order has been issued on the employee's behalf by a court of this state or by a court of another state, provided if issued by a court of another state, the protective order shall be registered in this state pursuant to section 46b-15a. For purposes of this section, "crime victim" means an employee who suffers direct or threatened physical, emotional or financial harm as a result of a crime or an employee who is an

immediate family member or guardian of a person who suffers such harm and is a minor, physically disabled or incompetent, or a homicide victim. (C.G.S. § 54-85b)

An employer may not fire, harass, threaten or otherwise coerce an employee because the employee, as a parent, spouse, child sibling or designated decision maker of a victim of homicide, attends the criminal court proceeding of the person(s) charged with committing the crime that resulted in the victim's death. (C.G.S. § 54-85d)

Availability of Telephone Hotline.

The Office of Victim Services makes a telephone hotline available to provide victims with information or referrals for various services for victims of crimes and their families. (C.G.S. § 54-203(b)(10))

Photograph of Deceased Victim.

A photograph not to exceed 8 inches by 10 inches of the deceased victim prior to the date of the offense, that is a fair and accurate representation of the victim and is not inflammatory, may be shown to the jury during the opening and closing arguments by the prosecuting authority. (C.G.S. § 54-85e)

Failure to Prosecute a Case.

Whenever a prosecutorial official declines to criminally prosecute any person in connection with a victim's death, a member of the deceased person's immediate family may file a written complaint with the Chief State's Attorney or the Criminal Justice Commission. The Chief State's Attorney or the Criminal Justice Commission must respond in writing within thirty days of the receipt of such complaint. (C.G.S. § 51-277d)

DEFINITIONS

abridged	cut short, reduced
accelerated rehabilitation	first time offenders have one chance for up to 2 years probation. Case dismissed if offender successfully completes probation
accused	person charged with a crime
advocate	person acting on victim's behalf who gives assistance, information, support and referral
arraignment	offender brought to court soon after arrest to hear formal charges and enter plea
civil court	court handling private rights of individuals other than criminal, for example lawsuits
compensation	financial payment for out-of-pocket costs to crime victims and family members
complaint	formal written statement or charge filed in criminal court which accuses a person of committing a certain crime
conviction	decision that offender is guilty of a criminal charge
defendant	person charged with a crime or named in a complaint
delinquency hearing	court hearing to decide if charges will be brought against the juvenile
designated decision maker	a person aged 18 or older who has been designated in a signed document made by another person 18 or older, to make certain decisions and to have certain rights and obligations with respect to the maker of the document
dismissal	criminal case is dropped
disposition	court order/decision
felony	a serious crime punishable by more than one year in prison
HIV test	laboratory test for AIDS
juvenile	person under 16 years old
nolo contendere	defendant does not contest charges but does not admit guilt
notification	informing people who request it about criminal justice proceedings
offender	person convicted of a crime

parole	conditional release of convicted person before entire sentence served
peace officer	police or other official responsible for keeping peace
pecuniary harm	financial harm
plea	the offender's response to criminal charges, which can be: guilty; not guilty; nolo contendere (not admit guilt and not argue charges); or Alford plea (not admit guilt, but agree there's enough evidence to convict)
plea agreement	offender and prosecutor agree on charges, plea, and sentence - no trial occurs
plea bargain	outside of courtroom, defense discusses with prosecutor whether charges should be nolle, changed or dismissed; an agreement is subject to court approval
polygraph exam	lie detector test
pre-sentence investigation	judge orders investigation of person found guilty or who pleads guilty, to help determine sentence
probation	court grants offender supervised, conditional freedom
prosecutor	a government attorney representing the public against persons accused of crimes
protective order	criminal court order to protect a family violence victim from threats or harassment by an arrested offender
restitution	convicted person gives court-ordered payment in services or dollars to crime victim or community
restraining order	civil court order forbidding certain actions, usually contact between accused and victim, family or household member
sentence	punishment the judge orders for a convicted offender
standing criminal restraining order	restraining order which remains in effect until modified or revoked by the court
statute	a law passed by a governing body such as a state legislature
victim impact statement	written or verbal statement by victim and/or family members given to a judge, about the crime's impact upon victim's life
witness	anyone who testifies in court including the victim
youthful offender	a person aged 16 or 17 who is accused of certain crimes

NOTES
